

**Coventry Fire District**  
**AFD Board of Directors**

**May 23, 2007**

**Meeting of the Coventry Fire District board of directors**

**Board members in attendance**

**Gary Cote, Edward Webster, Pat Lefebvre, Domenic Terracciano,  
Shirley Matthews**

**Clerk:**

**Keith Calci**

**Minutes of the meeting:**

**7:00 Meeting Started**

**1. Board of Directors update & discussion**

**Mr. Cote discussed results of the drinking water test, the water is safe to drink but has a lousy taste and is looking into options for drinking water.**

**Mr. Cote has received 3 unopened bids for demolition of the Washington street house to be read at some point during meeting. A lighting issue on South Pond Dr. was discussed, Chief Warren will look into a solution to the problem.**

**Mr. Cote read a letter from Michael J. Crocker Esq. A copy of the letter will be attached to minutes with the names deleted.**

**Mr. Cote questioned the heavy pickup of garbage from the**

**Washington street house. Mrs. Matthews stated she will call the town tomorrow.**

**Mr. Cote commented that he was very impressed with the way the firefighters worked at the recent fatal fire in the district.**

**Mrs. Matthews thanked Mr. Budziack for the flower donation to the station, the firefighters planted them.**

**Mrs. Matthews gave a report on the cost for a new boiler for the station. A bid was received from RISE for \$18,980.00 with a possible \$4,000.00 credit through the greenhouse act. Rebate is only available this year until the money is gone. Mr. Terracciano suggested to lock in a price with RISE if we could. Oil savings from installing a new boiler was discussed.**

**Mr. Webster questioned the pumping of the oil out of the house. Mrs. Matthews reported they had not done it yet, but it will be done soon. Mr. Cote reported that the power has been shut off after Mrs. Matthews had faxed over paperwork that the building was being demolished.**

**Mr. Cote opened the demolition bids.**

**NE wrecking \$18,200.00**

**American recycling \$14,500.00**

**Casino Corp. \$12,400.00**

## **2. Public comment & discussion**

**Mr. Carlow asked the board if it is necessary to demolish the building or would the district better benefit from the property being sold. Mr. Cote spoke about parking being a problem during tax**

collection time. Mrs. Matthews stated it has already been decided to tear down the building. Mr. Gorman questioned how this could be decided without even opening the demolition bids and knowing the cost of demolition. Mr. Cote said taxpayers could come up with a different resolution, also discussed zoning regulations and sewer assessments for the dwelling.

Mr. Gorman spoke about his concern with the way the bidding processes is being done in this district, explaining how most districts and municipalities request bids. Mrs. Lefebvre thanked Mr. Gorman for his input.

Mr. Gorman asked if the district has solidified the district board positions and questioned about the revised By laws and Charter. Mr. Cote explained that they have formed a citizens advisory committee to review the By laws and Charter. Also we will be holding a special meeting the second or third week of June to ratify some issues. Mr. Cote stated there are four to five major issues the district is facing that the board is working on. The district attorney has been over the Bylaws and Charter and it will be addressed during the special meeting.

Mr. Gorman asked about treasurers reports that he had been asking to see included into the meeting, monthly reports and minutes. Mr. Cote stated he will take it into advisement.

Mr. Gorman asked what the district has done to save money. Mr. Cote reviewed the first treasurers report he received. He explained that we now buy fuel from the town of Coventry, the district is working to change insurance carriers. Mr. Cote explained that we don't have to

pay for the utilities for the rental unit that we were not receiving rent for.

Mr. Gorman stated he hasn't seen much to save money because we have purchased saws, given away department ladders and hired a firefighter. Mr. Terracciano replied a lot of things take time and research. Mr. Cote explained that he received bids to buy the saw and rescue ropes.

Mr. Gorman asked how the district could justify hiring a firefighter. Mr. Cote explained that they are covered contractually.

Mr. Gorman question the hiring practices of the district, hiring a chief (Beckman) and now a firefighter with no application process, no interview or testing process. Mr. Cote stated that Mr. Hartman Jr. took the Beacon test and passed it and that we hired from within. Mr. Cote stated he believed that we set a benchmark by sending the new hire for a pre-employment physical and psychological test which he must pass before hired. Mr. Cote stated short of advertising, he felt they did everything and felt they didn't have to advertise because they hired from within. Mr. Gorman asked if we fall under the equal opportunity act. Mr. Cote said no because we have under 15 employees. Mr. Webster stated it was an eleventh hour decision and the contract had to be filled so that's what happened.

An audience member stated she felt the district did not give the same opportunity of employment to her family as it gave to Mr. Harmans' family'. Mr. Cote stated that Chief Hartman had no effect on the hiring of his son Joe Hartman Jr.

Mrs. Lefebvre stated she agrees with Mr. Gorman that we have to

put a hiring policy in place and stated there will be a policy in place when they hire a Chief.

Mr. Gorman stated he has a problem with every week the agenda being the same, going into executive session for personnel matters, the district needs to specify what it is for. Mrs. Lefebvre states they can make that happen.

A current volunteer firefighter for the district asked why he wasn't given a chance at employment and what the process was for employment. Mr. Cote reexplained what he had previously spoken about. The volunteer explained he handed in his qualifications to Chief Beckman in front of the board and asked again what the process is. Mr. Cote stated the district doesn't have a written process that covers hiring practices. I, Keith Calci, stated that during the meeting Hartman Jr. was hired I questioned the board about what they were doing and if it was a legal way to hire. The volunteer asked if the district is still going to hire. Mr. Cote stated that he will be speaking to the district's attorney in the morning.

Mr. Cote addressed insurance salesmen that were here to talk about insurance. Mrs. Lefebvre stated that in the future we should allow outside speakers to talk first. Mr. Smith from Colonial Insurance spoke to the firefighters and the board about disability and accident insurance for municipal employees.

Mr. Cote stated the board will not convene into executive session this evening. Mr. Webster made a motion for adjournment, Mr. Terracciano seconded the motion. Mr. Cote, Mrs. Lefebvre, Mrs.

**Matthews were all in favor. Meeting is adjourned.**

**Submitted,**

**Keith Calci**

**Clerk**